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LETTER DATED 23 JULY 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of the note verbale which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi has just sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania concerning serious threats to security on the common border (see annex).

I take this opportunity to reiterate the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Burundi to address the refugee issue in the context of the relevant international and regional agreements. Our earnest hope is that the commitments by the parties to these agreements, especially the tripartite agreement between Burundi, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Tanzania, will be respected, and that the mechanisms provided will be used, without prevarication, in order to safeguard the region's peace and stability.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Gamaliel NDARUZANIYE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-21665 (E) 230799 230799

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Annex

Note verbale dated 22 July 1999 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Burundi addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania and has the honour to draw attention once more to the serious threats to security on the common border, following the intensification of attacks in Burundi and preparations by Burundian rebels for infiltration from Tanzanian territory.

1. Since May, we have been observing renewed infiltration by rebels. After attacking the centre of Gihofi and certain localities in the communes of Kayogoro, Kibago, Nyanza-Lac and Makamba, they are withdrawing towards Kirerema, Munanira and Kagunga in the Kigoma district of Tanzania.

2. Today reliable reports refer to the presence of several hundred members of an attacking force in Kirerema and Migongo in Tanzania, poised to attack Burundi.

3. The same sources also report the arrival en masse in Tanzania of combatants of the Front pour la défense de la démocratie (FDD), accompanied by Interahamwe troops and former members of the Rwandese armed forces. They are coming from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and are preparing to launch heavy attacks on strategic targets in Makamba and Rutana provinces in Burundi.

4. There are also reports of acts of provocation likely to increase tension on the border, such as the theft of cattle by bands coming from Tanzania (with the full knowledge of the local authorities in that country), shots being fired in the direction of Tanzania by retreating assailants (so as to provoke incidents between troops stationed on either side of the border), distribution of pamphlets prepared in Tanzania, and so on.

5. In the provinces of Cankuzo, Ruyigi and Muyinga, scattered incidents are reported. They are the result of infiltrations by rebels coming round from Mt. Kabuyenge and withdrawing towards Muhange in Tanzania. The communes of Muyinga, Mwakiro, Buhinyuza, Gisuru, Cendajuru and Gisenyi are experiencing large number of infiltrations by attacking forces coming from refugee camps in the districts of Ngara and Kibondo in Tanzania.

On the basis of all these reports, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi requests the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to take every practical measure necessary to stop this upsurge in infiltrations by Burundian rebels and to prevent the arrival in Tanzania of a new influx of FDD combatants, reinforced by Interahamwe troops and former members of the Rwandese armed forces, who are dreading the approaching ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and who would like to disrupt

security in Burundi at a time when the Arusha negotiations are reaching a crucial phase.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi calls for the urgent holding, in Kigoma, of the security meeting that was initially scheduled for the end of June 1999 by the Ministers of Defence of the two countries at their meeting in Dar es Salaam on 1 June 1999.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi takes this opportunity to convey to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania the renewed assurances of its highest consideration.